



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

July 22, 2015

Mr. C. R. Pierce  
Regulatory Affairs Director  
Southern Nuclear Operating Co., Inc.  
P.O. Box 1295 / BIN B038  
Birmingham, AL 35201-1295

SUBJECT: EDWIN I. HATCH NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2 – STAFF REVIEW  
OF INTERIM EVALUATION ASSOCIATED WITH REEVALUATED SEISMIC  
HAZARD IMPLEMENTATION OF NEAR-TERM TASK FORCE  
RECOMMENDATION 2.1 (TAC NOS. MF5243 AND MF5244)

Dear Mr. Pierce:

By letter dated March 12, 2012 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML12053A340), the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued a request for information pursuant to Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 50, Section 50.54(f) (hereafter referred to as the 50.54(f) letter). The request was issued as part of implementing lessons-learned from the accident at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant. Enclosure 1 to the 50.54(f) letter requested that licensees reevaluate seismic hazards at their sites using present-day methodologies and guidance. Enclosure 1, Item 6, of the 50.54(f) letter requested that licensees identify "interim evaluation and actions taken or planned to address the higher seismic hazard relative to the design basis as appropriate, prior to completion of the [seismic] risk evaluation." In addition to the interim evaluation provided in the March 2014 Seismic Screening and Hazard report, the licensees for the Central and Eastern United States committed to providing the Expedited Seismic Evaluation Process (ESEP) report, an interim evaluation, by December 31, 2014.

By letter dated December 30, 2014<sup>1</sup>, Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc. (SNC, the licensee), provided its ESEP report in response to Enclosure 1, Item (6) of the 50.54(f) letter, for Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2 (Hatch). The NRC staff assessed the licensee's implementation of the ESEP guidance through the completion of a reviewer checklist<sup>2</sup>. In support of NRC staff's questions, SNC provided a response dated April 16, 2015<sup>3</sup>, clarifying submittal information. Based on the NRC staff's review of the ESEP report and responses to the staff's questions, the NRC staff concludes that the licensee's implementation of the interim evaluation meets the intent of the guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> The December 30, 2014, letter can be found under ADAMS Accession No. ML15049A502.

<sup>2</sup> The Hatch ESEP NRC review checklist can be found under ADAMS Accession No. ML15190A131.

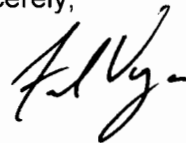
<sup>3</sup> The SNC response to NRC staff questions can be found ADAMS Accession No. ML15106A549.

The NRC staff concludes that, through the implementation of the ESEP guidance, the licensee identified and evaluated the seismic capacity of certain key installed mitigating strategies equipment that is used for core cooling and containment functions to cope with scenarios that involve a loss of all alternating current power and loss of access to the ultimate heat sink to withstand a seismic event greater than the reevaluated hazard for Hatch, Unit 1 and up to two times the safe shutdown earthquake for Hatch, Unit 2. The licensee's ESEP assessment provides additional assurance, which supports continued plant safety while the longer-term seismic evaluation is completed to support regulatory decision making. The NRC staff concludes that the licensee responded appropriately to Enclosure 1, Item (6) of the 50.54(f) letter. Application of this review is limited to the interim evaluation as part of the Recommendation 2.1 Seismic review.

The NRC staff notes that Enclosure 3 of the December 30, 2014, letter contains regulatory commitments to complete ESEP activities and submit a results letter to NRC within 90 days following completion of ESEP activities (no later than 90 days after the spring 2018 and spring 2017 outages for Unit 1 and Unit 2, respectively).

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-1617 or via e-mail at Frankie.Vega@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Vega'.

Frankie G. Vega, Project Manager  
Hazards Management Branch  
Japan Lessons-Learned Division  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-321 and 50-366

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The NRC staff concludes that, through the implementation of the ESEP guidance, the licensee identified and evaluated the seismic capacity of certain key installed mitigating strategies equipment that is used for core cooling and containment functions to cope with scenarios that involve a loss of all alternating current power and loss of access to the ultimate heat sink to withstand a seismic event greater than the reevaluated hazard for Hatch, Unit 1 and up to two times the safe shutdown earthquake for Hatch, Unit 2. The licensee's ESEP assessment provides additional assurance, which supports continued plant safety while the longer-term seismic evaluation is completed to support regulatory decision making. The NRC staff concludes that the licensee responded appropriately to Enclosure 1, Item (6) of the 50.54(f) letter. Application of this review is limited to the interim evaluation as part of the Recommendation 2.1 Seismic review.

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If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-1617 or via e-mail at Frankie.Vega@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Frankie G. Vega, Project Manager  
Hazards Management Branch  
Japan Lessons-Learned Division  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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